

SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

NONCONFORMIST.

LONDON: WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 1869.

[GRATIS.]

Anniversary Meetings.

(Continued from page 462.)

HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The fifty-first annual meeting of this society was held on Tuesday evening, May 10th, at Finsbury Chapel. There was a very numerous attendance. Samuel Morley, Esq., M.P., presided. The Rev. A. McAulane gave out the 92nd hymn, after which the Rev. E. H. Jones engaged in prayer.

The Rev. J. H. Wilson, the secretary, read the report, which gave an encouraging account of the progress of the work of the society. "Ten years ago it stood very much alone in the work of home evangelisation; now it is affiliated with every county association in England. Then it had 116 agents, all of whom were village pastors; now it has 132 mission pastors, and ninety-three evangelists. Then the annual income of the society and county associations combined was 12,500l.; now it is about 25,000l., besides what is raised by the mission churches themselves. It would be a poor compensation for this increase of paid agency if it had weakened the motive to voluntary service; but instead of this it appears that while in 1860 there were 2,000 voluntary workers, in 1870 there are nearly 3,000, who are engaged every Sunday, some preaching, some visiting, and others teaching upwards of 30,000 children in the Sunday-schools." Relative to the aggressive work carried on by the society, it is stated:—

A few years since a central mission was established at Rugby; it is now an active and aggressive Church, with a new chapel and schools, and the prospect of being soon self-supporting. At New Brompton, near Chatham, another new interest has been formed, which promises speedily to be independent; at Hythe and Bognor, and New Hampton, chapels have been built; at Wolverton another cause has been established in the midst of a growing population, and twelve other stations have been taken in hand during the past year. In 1860 the society supported three English missions in Wales; but in connection with the Welsh Auxiliary it now helps to sustain fourteen mission churches, and has spent under this new arrangement a sum of nearly 2,000l.

The grouping of stations proceeds hopefully. As a rule, the committee unite small village churches with stronger centres as pulpits become vacant. There are now more than fifty stations of this description, with mission pastors, evangelists, and lay preachers, to conduct the services. County associations all testify to the value of this system of concentration, and heartily co-operate with the Home Missionary Society in carrying it into effect.

The lay evangelists are still the greatest aggressive power which has yet been employed. Seven years ago there were only ten connected with the society, now there are ninety-three. The reports of county associations teem with evidence of the great importance of this agency, while the appendix to this summary contains most gratifying proof of the good it has done.

It is impossible to overrate the value of Christian literature as a means of evangelising the rural districts, and therefore the committee has earnestly laboured to diffuse it. To enable them to do this economically, Mr. Bewley, of Dublin, made a grant to the society of 400,000 tracts; the Religious Tract Society, 100l. worth; the Sunday School Union, 10,000 of their various periodicals; and Mr. Drummond, of Stirling, has added largely to these generous donations, while the evangelists have also sold 3,000 copies of the Scriptures, and more than 100,000 periodicals, including our denominational magazines, the *British Workman*, the *Cot-tager*, and the *Band of Hope Review*.

The report stated, in reference to last year's work of the society, that nearly 1,000 additions had been made to the membership of the mission churches, and that many of these persons were already at work in the home mission field. Several illustrations were given of the good effected by the agency of the society. For instance:—

When the society sent an agent to Morecombe Lake, Dorset, more than thirty years ago, there was only one Bible in his district, and no Gospel in the Church; last year that agent was removed by death, but not until the "wilderness" had become a fruitful field. Three chapels have been built; a prosperous church has existed for years; two day-schools have afforded the means of education to thousands of children; and now there is not a cottage in which the Bible is not to be found, and few in which the grace of God has not a place.

Reference was made to the loss the society sustained by the deaths of Mr. Abraham (the honorary solicitor), Mr. Eusebius Smith, Dr. Geo. Smith, and Mr. J. G. Martin. With regard to the future, it is remarked that the society has now "to contend with error and superstition such as never were known in its earlier days."

Mr. OLAPHAM read the financial statement, which showed a total expenditure during the year of 9,143l., and a balance in hand of 572l.

The CHAIRMAN, in some brief introductory remarks, alluded to a statement recently made by the Bishop of Ely, to the effect that the unbelief of the present day was fast developing into pure materialism. He (Mr. Morley) believed that they should be doing much to meet this growing evil by extending an agency of humble, unobtrusive men, who not only preach Christ, but live Christ. He knew of none of the many enterprises with which he was connected which equalled in importance the work in which they were engaged in this society. The number of their lay agents had now reached ninety-three, and he trusted that they should, during the coming year, not only make up the number to 100, which was the aim of their excellent secretary, but also make an advance to double that number.

The Rev. R. W. DALL, in moving the adoption of the report, said that the great work to be done in these large towns rendered them liable to forget the smaller towns and villages to which this society mainly directed its efforts. There never was a time when it was more necessary than now for a central organisation to undertake this work, for the extension of railways, which enabled families to obtain their chief articles of consumption from a more distant market, had had an injurious effect upon the prosperity of those smaller towns, which were once the centres of operation among the villages and hamlets which surrounded them. He knew, however, something of the operations of the society, and of the agents which it employed; in his own county he knew one of the agents, who, to save the funds of the society, worked at harvest in August, and during the remainder of the year was incessantly employed in soothing the sorrowing, rebuking sin, and proclaiming the Gospel from house to house, and from hamlet to hamlet, and whose work had been wonderfully prospered by God. He doubted the validity of the theory by which such men were called "lay evangelists,"—unless they applied the same term to Peter, James, and John, who were sent by our Lord to the towns and villages of Galilee, and who, as "lay evangelists," did some of the highest works ever done for the Christian Church. He considered that the sooner they utterly excluded this term from their theological vocabulary the better would it be for the church on very many accounts. (Cheers.) In addition to this "irregular work," the society was assisting in the maintenance of struggling churches in some of the poor districts, and in those great manufacturing villages, those barracks of workmen, which, as at Wolverton, were springing up almost like Jonah's gourd. They could hardly over-estimate the amount of earnestness, enthusiasm, and courage which the visits of Mr. Morley and Mr. Wilson had infused into the country churches. Some persons spoke as though they considered it very disheartening to have to do evangelistic work in England when the people had had the Gospel for 1,400 years. They must not forget, however, the very obvious fact that the present inhabitants of England had only had the Gospel during the term of their own existence. If, when the conversation of an individual was secured he remained in the world permanently, the work of the church would probably be consummated in a short period, but it must not be forgotten that there was a new world to be converted every thirty years—that every child born had to be brought to Christ, as though no child before it had ever been brought to Christ before—and this must go on so long as men were being born. He feared that we had lost much of the evangelistic zeal of our forefathers. He did not believe that any labour undertaken from a sense of duty would enable the church to bring the world to Christ; they needed for such a work a revelation in their own hearts of the love of Christ in such a manner that whenever they saw a man not under the power of Divine grace the first thought should be, "Oh, how dark and miserable, desolate and lost, is the condition of my brother, whom Christ loves as well as Christ loves me, and I must for Christ's sake, at the instigation not of principle but of irresistible affection, endeavour to win him for Christ." It was not any sense of duty or law of righteousness which dragged Christ from His throne and caused him to lay His splendour by, it was because He loved us so well that He could not help coming. Christian work must be done in the same spirit in which Christ undertook redemptive work. The work of recalling a lost race to the love of God was a vast work, but let us not be tempted to lose hope and abandon the work which God has carried on through so many centuries, and which, if He had not continued to carry on, we ourselves should

never have received forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal glory. (Cheers.)

The Rev. R. ASHTON, of Weymouth, seconded the proposition. The county of Dorset, in which he was labouring, was neither physically, intellectually, nor morally, the garden of England. Among Episcopalian ministers there were many excellent Evangelical clergymen, but more Ritualists; there are some Baptists, but very few; and the Wesleyans here have not succeeded as in other districts in getting the masses of the people under their control. Of the thirty or forty Congregational churches not ten are self-supporting. With an agricultural population receiving wages of 10s. a week, two hundred of such persons must make most liberal contributions to raise for their minister 10l. a year. The Home Missionary Society was therefore much needed in Dorsetshire, and he rejoiced to know that success was crowning their efforts in many places which for some time gave little sign of encouraging results.

The Rev. R. BALGARNIE, of Scarborough, in supporting the resolution, referred to the operations of the society in the North Riding of Yorkshire, as illustrative of the three great principles which lie at the foundation of this society, and he should be glad if they had on the platform some of the missionaries engaged in this work, that the assembly might become acquainted with the sort of agents which were employed. There were three classes of population in the North Riding—the fishing population, the agricultural class, and the mining class. There were ten stations in the North Riding, with twenty-five sub-stations grouped round them. One of these stations was called Robin Hood's Bay; it was only accessible at low tides. An agent of the society had toiled there for twenty-five years, and exerted an influence in the community not possessed by the pastors of much larger churches. The cause there was about to become self-sustaining, as was also the case at Redcar. Had the society done nothing but nurture these little churches into vigour, where ministers had been labouring for years on incomes of 70l. or 80l. a year, considerably less than the wages earned by mechanics around them, a most useful work would have been performed.

The Rev. THOMAS JONES, of Swansea, proposed the next resolution:—

That this meeting, with every desire for the progress of the Gospel abroad, would solemnly recognise the paramount claims of home, and believing that the agency of the Home Missionary Society is well adapted to rescue multitudes who are now perishing in England and Wales, strongly recommends it to the continued confidence and support of the friends of Home Evangelisation.

The speaker devoted his remarks to Wales, and especially to the claims of the English-speaking population of the Principality. He regretted the decay of the old Welsh language, for it was a remarkable fact that in some parts of Wales as the Welsh language disappeared the religiousness of the people disappeared. Where Welsh was spoken and preached the chapels were crowded; where English was spoken and preached it required something very special to bring the people to listen. Mr. Jones described the neglected moral and spiritual condition of numbers of English labourers who had emigrated to South Wales, and for whose religious instruction the existing provision was altogether inadequate. There was a work to be done in Wales, and the Welsh churches were not in a position to accomplish it:—

The rich people in Wales go to the Church of England—there is a charm in that. Money draws to money by the force of a natural law. The good old Church has a halo of glory about her temples because she is connected with the State, and wherever there is a spark of what is supposed to be respectability—it may not be the real thing, but if a man takes a fancy into his head that it is so, he will go and worship at the parish church. I am not going to mourn over this. Quite enough has been said about the poverty of the Welsh. They have capital preachers. Of all that I knew one had a shop, and another a farm, and every one his pony. I have no patience with all this complaint of poverty. We can take care of our own people, but we can't take care of the English people who have come among us. Amid a population of one million and a half the Congregationalists have built 900 chapels, and provided that the Gospel be preached in every one, so that not a Welshman in the Principality need be without the means of grace; but we can't build the new churches and support the English ministers, and whenever an English church is opened the neighbouring Welsh church loses some of its most influential members, as happened in the case of the church of which I am the minister, where there are some thirty, forty, or fifty members, some of the most wealthy of Dr. Rees' congregation, and Dr. Rees made a great sacrifice in forwarding the erection of that edifice. I thoroughly sympathise with the resolution which I have read to you, and concur in the sentiment

that home is paramount—"home, sweet home." As a representative of the Principality, I am reminded of a prayer said to have been uttered by a Welshman, who, after praying for blessings on all the churches, added, "above everything," a prayer for the church in his own locality, exclaiming, "Because Thou knowest that the elbow is nearer to the heart than the wrist, Lord, take care of our church." (Cheers.)

The Rev. C. WILSON, of Plymouth, briefly seconded the resolution, at the same time stating that he had, in his own district, had abundant opportunity of testing the great value of the Home Missionary Society.

The usual vote of thanks to the chairman was moved by Mr. JOSIAH ALEXANDER and seconded by Mr. ST. CLAIR.

Mr. MORLEY, in returning thanks, expressed the hope that the Home Missionary Society would, during the ensuing year, give attention to the condition of the English-speaking population in Wales, and afford help in the sustentation of the ministers. He trusted that Dr. Rees, whose exertions in the past he had found to operate as a stimulus to his own, would feel that he had a claim upon the Home Missionary Society to aid largely in his efforts among the English-speaking population of the Principality.

The meeting was closed with the doxology.

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The seventy-sixth anniversary of this society was held on Thursday last, in Exeter Hall. The chair was taken at ten o'clock by Jas. Sidebottom, Esq., of Manchester, who was supported by the leading friends of the society, and the hall was crowded in every part. After devotional exercises,

The CHAIRMAN, in the course of a brief speech, referred to his fifty years' connection with the society as proof of his sense of the honour of presiding on that occasion. During that period there had been a marvellous change in the mission field, and he expressed his gratification at the results of the efforts made by various sections of the Christian Church for carrying the Gospel to their fellow-men. He made a special reference to the great events in Madagascar, and altogether they were in circumstances of great rejoicing. But he did not think it safe to trust to the present amount of their ordinary income. It had been something like stationary for a great number of years. When he looked at the number of their churches, when he looked at their resources and their mighty influence throughout the length and breadth of the land, he would say to the directors with all sincerity, and in a firm belief that the day would come when it would be so, that the ordinary income of the society should be 100,000*l.* He did not think they were safe without it, and he commended the matter to the supporters of the society.

The Rev. Dr. MULLEN (Foreign Secretary) read the report, which stated that the number of missionaries connected with the society at present was 167, of whom 151 are abroad, and sixteen on furlough or sick leave. During the year they had accepted the services of eleven new missionaries. Some further, though but slow, progress had been made during the past year in completing arrangements for calling forth the manliness and independence of their native churches in the management of their own affairs—the difficulties being necessarily great, though self-government was both the privilege and the duty of Christian men. The condition of the missions in the South Seas, West Indies, and South Africa having been reviewed, the report went on to speak somewhat fully of India, the noblest sphere of effort which the world ever presented to the Christian Church, or which that Church could desire—

On the direct religious teaching of this multitude of people twenty-five missionary societies expend a sum of 800,000*l.* sterling a year, and employ more than 500 European and American missionaries, a fourth of the missionary agency working in all parts of the world.

The London Missionary Society has stations in fourteen of the provinces or districts into which India is divided, and some ten millions of people are largely dependent upon its teaching, among whom the society's missionaries preach in seven languages. The stations include in part the cities of Calcutta and Madras, and the towns of Benares and Mirzapore, of Bangalore, Bellary, and Coimbatore; all positions of importance, whether in relation to religion, to government, or to trade. Apart from the province of Travancore, the district of Cuddapah, and the rice-fields of Bengal, their missions are principally located in influential towns.

Previous to the mutiny the society had employed about forty-four missionaries in India. The intense interest excited by that grave event led to the earnest efforts made by the directors to increase that number by twenty. From the first considerable difficulty was experienced in realizing the project; but on three or four occasions special exertions were made to carry it out; and when the pressing need of Madagascar has been fully supplied it will become most important, within due bounds, to strengthen the Indian mission again. At this moment, after reckoning all recent changes, the society has on its staff forty-six missionaries in India, and there are four vacancies. A good proportion of the English missionaries in India are young men; but there are no less than seventeen who have been in the country at least fifteen years.

Of these brethren it can truly be said, one thing they do—they preach Christ, and Him crucified. Yet India is a country in which, far more than in others, a great variety of suitable plans may be adopted while the workers carry out that single end. Among the friends of some missions warm controversies have been carried on as to whether vernacular preaching or English and vernacular education is the superior form of usefulness. No such controversies have troubled this society, because the excellence of both schemes is admitted; each is found useful in its own sphere; no exclusive preference is allowed to either by the directors or the

missionaries; and while some of the brethren devote themselves to one form of labour, others are engaged in carrying out not one but many others. The directors earnestly desire that every English missionary shall acquire as full knowledge as possible of the native languages; and they are convinced that even a missionary engaged in Indian university education, in which the scholars are taught in English, will do his work all the better for knowing the native tongues. At this moment almost all varieties of agency are in active operation in the Indian mission. Preaching to the heathen; pastorate of churches; education of theological students; a medical mission; university education of various grades in English and Sanskrit; lectures; translations; girls' boarding-schools; day-schools; Zenana schools—all these forms of useful effort are maintained by the society. And in no part of the world has the society a larger proportion of able and devoted brethren who, diligently and in prayerfulness, strive to adapt all their plans to surrounding circumstances and make them successful in results.

The native churches which had been gathered were few and small; the number of members and of the Christian population was limited; and growth and aggregation were very slow. At their twenty stations, exclusive of Travancore, there were, in the aggregate, 977 members and 3,800 native Christians. With many striking proofs of genuine Christian zeal and devotion, the life of the Indian churches was, in general, deficient in force. Their zeal was limited, their liberality poor. As a rule, they wished everything done for them, and strove little for that manliness and self-reliance which would both render them independent of English help and send them forth with power to evangelise their countrymen. Native agency bore much the same character. Even at Travancore little progress had of late been made. The absence of three of its English missionaries, whose place it was impossible to supply, and the more complete surrender of the numerous churches to the care of the native pastors, had considerably affected their growth. These brethren, with all their gifts, need a wise guidance. The 250 congregations last year contained 2,560 members, and the Christian community numbered 32,700 individuals of all ages. Their contributions amounted to 1,204*l.* The educational labours of the society had been varied, and had undoubtedly contributed in great degree to the enlightenment both of Christians and heathen.

The growth of the native churches, and especially of the Christian women, in intelligence and character, is very largely due to the daily training of Christian boarding-schools, to their Bible-classes, their discipline and instruction, and to the personal influence of the missionaries' wives. In a measure not to be overrated, the latter have stamped their influence upon the native Christian community, and if they could not give their people stamina, they have at least stimulated, developed, and guided the moral principles which they did possess. These Christian girls' boarding-schools are now fourteen in number, and last year contained three hundred and fifty girls. To them also, and to the ladies who are missionaries of the society, are due the new efforts to maintain superior day-schools, and those Zenana schools and classes in which the female members of Hindoo households receive the instruction for which only a few years ago none cared.

The experience of missionary societies, in the great centres of Hindoo influence, especially in Bengal and Northern India, has shown that a broad Christian education is of the highest value as an evangelising agency. It gets hold of the most intelligent classes; it retains its audiences and gives the same persons repeated lessons during several years; it trains and moulds their thoughts at an impressionable age; and thus all truth, scientific, moral, religious, has its weight in forming their character and determining the course of their future life. Two thousand scholars leave the schools every year, and during the last twenty years some forty thousand have passed through their course of study. Thousands of their students, though not converted men, and not ready to fight bravely against idolatry and caste, have lived a higher moral life, have been distinguished for truthfulness, uprightness, diligence in business, and have proved their anxiety to benefit others. Thousands of them are convinced that Christianity is true, and they are waiting for the good time when it will cost no penalties to profess it.

At present the society devoted to this work of education in India the entire or partial service of fourteen missionaries, and direct grants amounting to 1,300*l.* a year. Relative to the general results hitherto attained in India the report says:—

Not a few boldly, and with satisfaction, declare all Christian work a failure, but thoughtful men, who have watched the changes in Indian life for years together, pronounce it anything but fruitless. We may not have gathered large numbers of individual converts in the chief provinces; the churches formed may seem to be deficient in life, in spirituality, in earnestness; the active consecrated workers drawn out of them may be few; the great social obstacle interlaced with each other, and forming a barrier in the way of open profession, stronger and more compact than any other country has ever seen, may prove a hindrance and produce delay. But it is only delay after all; and in the great works of Providence and grace it is a common rule that the grander and ultimate result the more numerous are the processes, and the slower are they in working.

With regard to China, the sphere of work is limited, and the results moderate. There are about 120 Protestant missionaries in that empire. Missionary schools are poor, their scholars few, and pastoral work had not gone far. But public preaching and Christian literature are extensively employed in every centre of usefulness; they are specially suited to the circumstances of the case; and the number of services held every year, in cities and villages, in permanent residences and when travelling in the interior, is very great. In several of the stations in China, however, gratifying results had been manifest:—

In the oldest missions of Amoy, Foo-chow, and Shanghai, the communicants are numbered by hundreds; rural missions are beginning to spread; and not

one of the younger stations is without sincere converts. Sober calculation reckons 3,500 members in the Christian churches, in full communion, in a Christian community of 12,000 persons.

The mission of the London Missionary Society is carried on in seven of the great cities by twenty English missionaries, and has gathered into native churches 1,420 members. In carrying out the two great plans of public preaching and spreading Christian literature, the missionaries of the society have always been abreast of their neighbours and fellow-workers. Several of them are distinguished as eloquent preachers of the native tongue, and they have made valuable contributions to the present stock of Christian books. A careful calculation made four years ago showed that in the society's mission in China there were held by the English missionaries and native preachers 140 services every week, or not less than 7,000 in the course of the year.

The churches had increased by 150 members. The case of the Chinese mission was well stated in the following truthful words of the Rev. W. Jones, when describing his own mission among the villages of Singrowli:—"We are not anxious to make nominal converts, and we demur to the principle that missionary success is to be estimated by the number of baptisms that take place. Christ sent us not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel. Enlightenment must precede conversion. Proselytes may be made before enlightenment, but no converts can be made. It is the knowledge of God that is to produce the moral change predicted by the prophets, and our business is to communicate that knowledge." The report then refers to the familiar story of the great events in Madagascar, where the destruction of the idols left a million of people without a religion, and created a great demand for Christian teachers:—

This state of things might have involved complications on which missionaries of Free Churches, anxious to maintain complete separation between the functions of the Christian Church and of a Civil Government, would have looked with dread. But the able Christian man who now directs the public affairs of the island has comprehended the gravity of the circumstances which were thus presented, and has avoided the difficulties which appeared to be imminent. In consultation with the missionaries, the Minister suggested that inquiry should be made as to the number of villages in Imerina needing teachers; that each church and congregation should be invited to call out volunteers and undertake its own share in the general duty; and that the expenses of these volunteer evangelists should be provided by the free gifts of the churches. He added that the palace congregation would have their weekly collection, and that it should be shared among those churches which sent forth the largest number of teachers. A more simple and wise arrangement could not be suggested. Like other upright and straightforward plans, it not only avoided all difficulties, but both developed and applied in the best way the spiritual efforts of the churches to meet the heavy responsibilities suddenly laid upon them. It was at once adopted, was acted on without hesitation, and has proved truly successful.

The most recent statistics of the mission which we have received are given by the Rev. W. E. Cousins, in the following terms:—"The past year has been, probably, the most remarkable that has occurred in the history of Madagascar, and I think you will find the numerical increase to be without a parallel, at least in modern times. The total number of adherents has risen from 37,000 to 153,000 in twelve months, and even this is too low an estimate if we wish to include all who call themselves Christians. We have purposely reported lower numbers than the natives have given us, in very many cases. Besides this, there are congregations scattered over the whole island in the various ports and military stations, of which very few are included in our reports." Mr. Cousins report that the number of church-members has increased from 7,066 to 10,546. The increase is very moderate, and shows how careful the missionary brethren are to see their people well instructed and their religious character tried before they are admitted to the full privileges of Christian fellowship.

With regard to the country stations, the Rev. C. Jukes writes as follows:—"The wide extension of Christianity in the country has far exceeded our most sanguine expectations. We hoped for a great increase during the year 1869, but we have realised much more than we looked for. Nearly every important town and village now has its own sanctuary."

On the question of Government interference, respecting which some wrong impressions have gone abroad, the following striking testimony is given by Mr. Jukes:—"It is just to the Queen and her Prime Minister that I should state that I met with no instance on which coercion has been employed in the matter of religion. Everywhere their message was the same. 'If you want to pray, pray, for that is good; if you do not wish to pray, you are not compelled.'"

The directors felt the necessity of responding to the appeals made by their brethren in Madagascar. They agreed to send forth sixteen additional missionaries at an early date, of whom one-half are already on their way. With regard to the finances of the society, the income from general contributions up to May, 1870, is 57,796*l.*, being 2,390*l.* below those of last year, and considerably short of the contributions of 1868, though some 7,000*l.* beyond the average from 1861 to 1867. The proposal of the Board for a permanent increase of 10,000*l.* a-year had not therefore yet been realised. But the deficiency last year was made up by legacies, which are nearly 13,000*l.* Sir Francis Crossley, M.P., has given to the society 100,000 dollars in American Government Bonds, valued at 20,081*l.*, as a permanent investment. The gross receipts amount to 104,670*l.* 11*s.* 6*d.*, and the expenditure to 102,892*l.* 6*s.* 4*d.*, leaving a balance of 1,778*l.* 5*s.* 2*d.* in favour of the society. The receipts included 1,795*l.* from Australia and foreign societies, 20,160*l.* from mission stations raised and appropriated, and 3,980*l.* from the Madagascar mission.

The Rev. R. BAUCE, of Huddersfield, moved the first resolution as follows:—

That the report, of which portions have now been read, be adopted, and that it be circulated under the direction of the

board, with the appendix and statement of accounts. That this meeting offers its devout thanks to God for His great goodness during the past year, in so fully providing for the society's wants, and in granting His aid and blessing to those who have carried on its operations. While it has pleased Him to remove some faithful brethren, younger as well as some more experienced, from their work, He has graciously led other competent men to offer to the society their personal service, and to sustain it by generous gifts. This meeting desires specially to thank Sir Francis Omsley, Bart., M.P., for again expressing his deep interest in its prosperity by bestowing on it, in his gift of 20,000l., the noblest donation it has ever received; and it trusts that this valuable help to the Lord's work may be abundantly given back to his own heart in richest blessings of grace, mercy, and peace. The meeting rejoices to hear of the safe return of the John Williams to Sydney, and trusts that in the voyage of the present year a valuable increase may be made to the usefulness of the South Sea Mission by the locating of native missionaries on the Northern New Hebrides, and the establishment of an English missionary on New Caledonia. It cordially approves of the increase to the number of the society's missionaries in the interior of South Africa, and prays that the brethren labouring there may soon realise the full fruit of their long-continued and patient toil.

The speaker dealt with a number of topics suggested by the resolution, and in reference to what is going on in India, he said:—

There was nothing pleased me better in that most interesting and unique meeting attended by our distinguished visitor the Hindoo (Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen), than his honest confession that among the many benefits which England had conferred upon India were our Christian Scriptures. I am sorry he is not with us to-day. (Applause.) I believe he would have been if it had not been for a previous engagement. Some of our friends may suppose that Dr. Mullens got into strange company when he went to Hanover-square Rooms, but I fearlessly assert I would rather stand by Dean Stanley, and even Mr. Martineau and the Jewish Rabbi, to welcome and to bless that enlightened Theist progressing towards Christianity, as I believe, than I would stand side by side with His Holiness the Pope, and all his cardinals and bishops, while they are cursing all and sundry those who do not hold their tenets. (Applause.) I do not like this cursing. If there is one thing worse than profane swearing, it is religious cursing. (Applause and laughter.) It is not doing to others as ye would that they should do to you; and instead of frowning upon imperfect faith or honest doubt, which is not the spirit of my Master, I would rather welcome those men on their way to truth, and, as I see them standing, it may be far from the summit, but with their faces towards it, I would stand as it were on the top of a modern Mount of Beatitudes, and say to them from my heart, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled; blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," if they have not seen Him yet; and it is because they have seen Him consciously or unconsciously that they are so pure as they are. (Applause.) I am sure it is your prayer that that distinguished visitor may be not only almost but altogether such as we are, and even better, a true Christian, and that he will return to his own land and become one of many who will preach in better terms than Europeans to his own people the wonderful works of God. (Cheers.)

Dr. MULLENS then, on behalf of the directors, introduced the missionary brethren who had returned during the year. They included Mr. A. Stronach, connected with the Amoy mission; Mr. Mackenzie, from the interior of South Africa, who was one of the band that went out with Mr. Helmore in 1859; Mr. John Aston, from India, and three missionaries just proceeding to Madagascar.

The CHAIRMAN gave the missionaries, in the name of the meeting, a hearty welcome.

The Rev. J. MACKENZIE, in seconding the resolution moved by Mr. Bruce, referred to the sad story of the tragedy of 1859, when several missionaries went to the Makololo country, south of the Zambesi. They were spoiled of their substance by the Chief Sakeletu, they were robbed on every hand, and when death had thinned their ranks, when six Europeans and three natives had succumbed, as every one now believes, not to poison, but to the fever of the marshes, then the natives allowed Mr. Price and Mrs. Price, who was then still living, to depart with only a very little of those goods and necessities which they had taken with them. He stood there in a very singular position, having gone out in 1858 to a numerous and influential tribe (the Makololo) which has no longer any existence, having been since all but utterly destroyed. He was now labouring among the Bamangwato tribe, further south, in a town called Shoshong. The speaker gave a most interesting account of the daily toil undergone by the missionaries, and the dangers and privations to which they were constantly exposed, but at the same time, he said, there were gratifying results arrived at by the zealous and devoted services of the missionaries. It had been asked whether the same results might not be obtained by means of introducing civilisation into those regions; but he would ask in reply, why attempt to separate that which was inseparable? Did a Christian missionary divest himself of his civilisation by going forth to preach the Gospel? On the contrary, he heightened his character as a civilised man, and while seeking to teach the doctrines of Christ he at the same time, by his language, manners, and living example, was both civilising and Christianising the savage and the heathen.

When a Christian missionary placed in the position in which I have been looks northwards, he is confronting the Paganism of thousands of miles and of thousands of years; there is no true worship that he knows of between him and the Mediterranean Sea; when he looks southward he can think of a station here and another there as it were the advanced body of aggressive Christianity endeavouring to win its way into that dark continent. Think, then, of the solemnity of the position of him who honestly stands up and preaches the Gospel and disturbs this Paganism from the sleep of centuries. I find in reading the first accounts of the preaching of Christianity, that some believed the word, and some believed it not. Now, that is the story I have got to tell you. I have got no rose-tinted tale with which to

dandle you; I have got no attractive or brilliant description with which to play upon your imagination or your fancy this day. Your servants in Southern Africa are endeavouring to preach and to live Christianity, and Christianity in my opinion is having there by their preaching and by their lives an abundant and a very gratifying success. If we take, for instance, the district of country where Mr. Moffat has so long laboured, you will find, if you refer to his book, that so abandoned and desperate were they in their heathenish habits that they actually stole the piece of meat out of his pot, and being something of wit withal, they put a stone in its place—(laughter)—but instead of such a state of things, instead of incessant wars between one tribe and another, in every large city there is now a Christian church, in every considerable town some who are the disciples of Jesus Christ, in every hamlet I would make bold to say those who are able to read, and who are giving some amount of attention to Christianity. Of course if we go farther, where I myself have been labouring, and where Mr. Price has been labouring, and with greater truth still, where our brethren are labouring amongst the Matabele, there the two powers are grappling together in what is the death grapple of Paganism and the conquest of Christianity. At the station where I myself have been residing, Christianity has had the effect which it has had elsewhere—of dividing households, and of separating the parent from the child. It has had this result in my own experience by calling out the sons of the chief of the town and causing them to become our most hopeful adherents, and by driving the father first to carelessness and thoughtlessness, and afterwards to the bitterest and fiercest opposition to Christianity, and endeavour as far as he could to put it down. However, without entering into the details of this, you will allow me to say that that result has not been attained. Instead of finding himself now, as he had hoped, the master of a heathen town undisturbed by Christianity coming and warning him of the evil of certain courses, and telling him of the loving Father who would win him to nobler and higher courses, he has been expelled from that town, which is now in the possession of a chief who is supporting Christianity, and giving freedom to the preachers to preach it, and freedom to his subjects to profess it throughout the whole town. Besides those living there in whom I have confidence as Christians, a considerable result has been obtained in the general life and thought of the people. When I went there the Sabbath was not, of course, observed, it was all one dreary and monotonous heathen life; when I came away I learnt to my surprise that the Sabbath was observed by the majority of the people to this extent, that they do not on that day any longer go to their fields to cultivate, or to the open country to hunt, or embark in any of those avocations in which they are usually employed. This will show you the kind of gradual work which men carry on in your name and by your aid in such lands—the gradual, silent work of swaying people's minds from the monotonous heathenism of the past to the new and living existence of a higher and a nobler Christianity. (Loud cheers.)

The collection having been made, the Rev. DONALD FRASER moved the following resolution, and supported it in an eloquent speech:—

That this meeting rejoices to hear of the valuable testimony borne by weighty authorities to the solid progress of Christian Missions in India; to the extensive spread of religious knowledge and enlightenment among the general population; to the decay of faith in idolatry; and to the formation of a new and numerous school of men by whom the superstitions of Hindooism are largely rejected. It rejoices to hear of the increase in the number of ordained native missionaries and pastors, especially among the churches of Travancore; and trusts that the spiritual life of those churches may be strengthened and increased. It desires to offer special thanksgivings to God for His great grace and goodness vouchsafed to the missionaries in Madagascar, and to the churches under their care; it rejoices to hear of the continued increase to these churches; of the large congregations gathered to hear the Word of God, and of the willingness of their members to become teachers and helpers of their ignorant countrymen. It especially blesses God for that spread of faith and enlightenment which has led to the burning of the idols of Imerina; it cordially approves the plan of the directors to strengthen the mission by sending out sixteen additional missionaries; and fervently prays that, by His blessing on these and other means of grace, that God, who has dealt so wonderfully with Madagascar in days gone by, will graciously preserve the churches from all evil and fill them with spiritual life and power in days to come.

The Rev. Dr. LOWE (a medical missionary) seconded the resolution, and gave a very interesting account of what is being done at the dispensary and hospital at Neyoor in Southern India. He said:—

The way in which we carry on our work is simply this: exactly at nine o'clock in the morning the doors of our waiting-room are opened. If you were standing at the gate before that time you would see coming from all quarters groups of men, women, and children, the halt, the lame, the blind, the sick; some of them carried in cots, others helped along by their friends. They spread mats upon the ground, and place their cots beneath the shade of the palmyra trees, or jack trees, or tamarind trees, and there they rest awhile after their long journey. When the doors are opened the patients and their friends are admitted, and they are arranged, the men on one side, and the women and children on the other. Many who have gone through the length and breadth of India, and have visited me at Neyoor, have said that they never witnessed a sight like that. You see there sitting side by side the Brahmin and the Sudra, the Shanar, the Poolah, and the Pariah, men, women, and children, of all castes and creeds, sitting under the same roof listening to the same sweet story of redeeming love, and that in a land of caste, prejudice, and a land of idols. We commence our work by reading a portion of Scripture, perhaps one of our Lord's parables, or a miracle, and then in as simple a way as possible we try to tell them the way of salvation. We remind them of the awful disease that afflicts their souls, and we point them to Jesus, the great physician, who alone can cure them. Then we ask them to kneel down and engage in prayer; after prayer we go amongst them and distribute tracts, reading them to those who cannot read. In this way upwards of 70,000 persons have passed through our hands during the past seven or eight years in connection with the hospital, many of whom would never otherwise have heard the story of the Gospel. Hundreds of our heathen patients have year by year, I will not say become Christians, but re-

nounced idolatry and devil-worship, and have, outwardly at least, embraced Christianity, and, in a few instances, they have been consistent members of the Church of Christ, adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. Two of them who, seven years ago, were bowing down to images of wood and stone, are now fellow-labourers. About five years ago I commenced training a class of native Christian youths as medical evangelists. They passed through a course of four years of practical and systematic training in connection with the hospital, and now I really think these young men are in my absence carrying on the work successfully. I opened three branch dispensaries some months before I left, and gave up almost entirely the routine and care of the hospital and dispensary to these young men in order to test them. I cannot tell you how much pleasure it was to me to see these young men performing major operations in surgery, amputations, excisions of tumours, and that most delicate of all operations, the removing of cataract, and performing them as successfully as any European surgeon.

The speaker then referred to the general work carried on in India, and to the urgent necessities of that great empire, where they were beginning to see the beginning of a native pastorate, the establishment of a self-supporting, self-governing native church. The preaching of the Gospel in India had produced a wide-spread impression.

The seed has been sown broadcast throughout the land, and the direct results are that 200,000 professing Christians have been gathered out of heathenism, and a native church has been established with upwards of 50,000 communicants, and with between 3,000 and 4,000 native agents, and labouring with us for the enlightenment and evangelisation of their fellow-countrymen. But there is another result, the value of which, in its bearing upon the future, when God shall be pleased to pour out His Spirit from on high, cannot be over-estimated. Thousands and thousands there are in that dark land of idols who know the truth now, who are convinced that Christianity is true, who have no faith whatever in their idols or in the traditions of their ancestors, but who are afraid or ashamed openly to acknowledge their convictions. Millions there are in that dark land who have heard the sweet story of redeeming love, into whose hearts the seeds of Divine truth have fallen. Let but the dew of the Spirit descend upon that seed, lying at present dormant in the soil, and may we not expect to see a nation, as it were, born in a day? "Then shall the wilderness become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest." Many and great are our encouragements, but we dare not conceal the fact that, perhaps in no field of missionary enterprise are there greater obstacles, more insurmountable difficulties, humanly speaking, than in India. Foremost amongst these hindrances stands caste, that masterpiece of Satan's devices with which he has bound the nation for ages past, and which stands as a mighty barrier at every step of evangelistic effort. Then there are living systems of religion and superstition which, having held their undisputed sway over the thoughts and habits of men for so many ages, have so corrupted the heart and blinded the mind, that from every standpoint, save that of faith, the general conversion of India seems more than a hopeless enterprise. Then there is the weakness and deseculation of the native character, which so often chills the energies, blasts the hope of the faithful labourer, and leaves him in mournful despondency to say, "I have laboured in vain; I have spent my strength for nought." But over and above all else is the mighty extent of the field, while the labourers are so few. Standing before those proud fortresses of Satan, confronted with two hundred millions of the hosts of the enemy, your little band of 500 men have fought nobly and well, and have won glorious triumphs for Christ. (Applause.)

The Rev. ALEX. STRONACH, missionary from Amoy, supported the resolution, and gave some interesting particulars of the mission established in that district. There were, he said, more than 400 adult Chinese in full Christian fellowship in connection with the mission, and about the same number in connection with each of the other two missions at work in Amoy and various country stations. About 100 Chinese children had been baptized, and were being brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The seed had been extensively sown, and by God's blessing it would spring up and bring forth abundant fruit.

The Rev. WM. ROBERTS moved the next resolution.

That, in reference to the constitution of the society, now brought to their notice, the members of the society agree with the directors that, while preserving unchanged the name of the society, and those great principles on which it was founded, it is desirable to remove from the existing constitution regulations which are no longer suited to the extent of the society's operations, but rather serve to impede its action; and, in other ways, to adapt the arrangements prescribed to the society's altered circumstances. They, therefore, adopt the constitution framed by the directors, and now presented for their approval; and empower the directors duly to carry it into effect.

He briefly explained the nature of the proposed modification in the constitution of the society, and some of the reasons for their adoption.

J. HAWKINS, Esq. (from India), seconded the resolution, and took occasion to allude to the action of the Propagation Society in reference to the sending of a bishop to Madagascar.

On the motion of J. A. COOPER, Esq., of Birmingham, seconded by WILLIAM MANNFIELD, Esq., of Liverpool, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

That the Hon. Arthur Kinnaird, M.P., be the Treasurer; that the Rev. Dr. Mullens be the Foreign Secretary, and the Rev. Robert Robinson and the Rev. William Fairbrother be Joint Home Secretaries of the society for the ensuing year; that the directors eligible be reappointed, and that the gentlemen whose names have been transmitted by their respective auxiliaries, and approved by the aggregate meeting of delegates, be chosen in the place of those who retire; and that the directors have power to fill up any vacancies that may occur during the year.

Dr. LOCKHART proposed, and Mr. G. J. WHITE seconded, a vote of thanks to the chairman, which was unanimously agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN having acknowledged the vote of

thanks, the doxology was sung, and the proceedings terminated.

LONDON CITY MISSION.

The thirty-fifth annual meeting of the subscribers to this society was held on Thursday in Exeter Hall; Lord Charles Russell occupied the chair.

The annual report submitted showed that the receipts for this year were 40,616*l.* 16*s.*, being 347*l.* 4*s.* in excess of the former year. The contributions to the disabled missionaries' fund were 701*l.* 12*s.* 10*d.*, and though larger than last year it was short of the expenditure by 92*l.* 9*s.* 6*d.*; but the committee purposed to disburse the claim out of the ordinary resources of the society. The expenditure for the year amounted to 27,500*l.* The Sea-side house at Ventnor, intended for missionaries exhausted with the work of the city, had been altered and made suitable for occupation. At present there are 375 missionaries engaged throughout the metropolis, who made 2,070,686 visits to the poor during the year and distributed 5,663 Bibles and 2,864,796 religious tracts. There had been restored to Church communion 263 persons, 905 drunkards had been reclaimed, 676 fallen women restored to their homes or placed in asylums, and 8,133 children sent to schools, and 184 shopkeepers had agreed to discontinue Sunday trading.

The CHAIRMAN said it was impossible to estimate the value of the City Mission and its agencies. The missionary worked quietly, and was to be found in homes visited by few others, and the statistics proved that a layman could expound the Bible to the poor with as much effect as any minister could possibly hope to do.

LORD SHAFTESBURY moved the adoption of the report. He said if they had not a church-going population, they required a house-going minister. The London City Mission supplied that want. He believed that infidelity was rapidly on the increase, and was fostered by the pernicious light literature of the present day which tended to demoralise the mind of youth. Roman Catholicism was also spreading, but not so much among the working people as among what were called the better classes. In the face of the two antagonists it was proposed to withdraw the Bible from the day-school, and if that was done and the sensational literature allowed to take hold of the young mind, in the course of eight or ten years there would crop up an abundant scepticism not easily to be rooted out. The Rev. Mr. Cadman seconded the resolution, urging on all sections of the Church to unite against the common enemy.

The Rev. THOMAS W. AVELING, of Kingland, moved the second resolution, pledging the meeting to give increased support to the society, and congratulating the subscribers on the success of its labours during the past year. He said the ignorance which prevailed in London would not be credited by the educated classes, and he referred to the case of a servant girl who called on him lately and asked him what was her soul. She had been educated in London at a national school, and never heard there anything about her spirit or her God, and he did think that was secular education with a vengeance. He was certain the wants of the London poor would never be met, however perfect might be their parochial system, however complete their congregational organisation. The obstacle they had to overcome was the unwillingness of vast masses of the people to come to their places of worship. Unless some other agency than the preaching of the Gospel were employed there were thousands in this metropolis who must go down to the grave as ignorant, as unfit to die, as if they had lived in an African desert. Archdeacon HUNT, of Baywater, in seconding the resolution, said that by the aid of city missionaries he had been enabled to preach the Gospel personally in every street and lane in his parish, and very many men had been brought to hear the Gospel in his church who had never been inside its doors before.

The Rev. JOHN WALTON (Wesleyan) moved the re-appointment of the officers and committee, and the thanks of the meeting to Lord Charles Russell for presiding. He was a plain Methodist preacher, and he took leave to think that John Wesley was a great home missionary, whatever else he was or was not. It was religious indifference they had to grapple with. It seemed to him the upper stratum of society had been pretty well worked—they must strike a deeper vein. The upper ten thousand of the villas in the suburbs had been so long preached to, that they could stand it. The hope of the Church now centred on the million, and the recruits that are to fill up her exhausted ranks must be gathered from the masses of the poor. Dr. Arnold once said he could not keep his own personal religion alive without intercourse with the poor, and he believed the life-blood of the Church must be drawn from them. It was not the working classes who had brought in Ritualism—who were trying to Romanise Old England;—if they went among them, they would find men of muscle and dew, of nerve and sinew, of heart and soul. (Cheers.)

The Rev. H. E. BROWN, of Stepney, gave some interesting details of the work of the missionaries in the east of London.

The Noble CHAIRMAN having acknowledged the vote of thanks, the meeting closed by singing the Doxology.

SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

On Thursday morning, May 5, delegates from country Sunday-school unions assembled in conference at the Sunday-school Lecture Hall. The chairman of the committee, Mr. Daniel Pratt, occupied the chair. There was a large attendance of representatives from all parts of England. The subject of conference was "National Education, and the re-

sponsibilities it will entail upon Sunday-school Teachers," which was ably introduced by Mr. JOHN SMITH. Mr. Groser, Mr. Hartley, Mr. Tresidder (secretaries), Mr. Charles Reed, M.P., Mr. Lea, M.P., and delegates from various parts of England, took part in the discussion. After dinner the conference was resumed, when Mr. J. S. Wright, of Birmingham, Mr. Gough, of Bristol, Mr. Scott, of Tasmania, and others took part.

The annual meeting was held on Thursday evening at Exeter Hall, which was, as usual, crowded in every part. The Hon. Arthur Kinnaird, M.P., presided, and among those present on the platform were Charles Reed, Esq., M.P.; Thos. Lea, Esq., M.P.; W. H. Stephenson, Esq., M.P., and other long-trying friends of Sunday-school work. A hymn having been sung, prayer was offered by the Rev. JOHN KEND, of Acton.

The CHAIRMAN said he had always felt it a great privilege to meet on this occasion so many who were engaged in a work the value of which could not be exaggerated, inasmuch as its chief object was the salvation of the souls of the children whom they taught. He felt that he should have the sympathy of those whom he was addressing when he expressed the hope that whatever educational measures might be brought forward, the Bible at all events shall never be excluded from the schools—(cheers)—that Bible which gives us a common ground on which we can all work; for he was thankful to say that even their Roman Catholic brethren adopted that basis, and were co-operating with a view of retaining the Bible in the public schools. The time might come when they might be as earnest to retain the Scriptures in their own schools, despite the efforts of any priesthood in the world. He felt that at this moment, unless they joined together and co-operated as one man, they might lose that inestimable blessing which they had had for so many years in this land. Still, to the Sunday-school teachers they must look as the real Scriptural instructors. It was perfectly true that they might hope to have efficient masters and mistresses in their common schools, but they could not hope to have teachers, as in the Sunday-schools, striving as their principal aim to lead the children to their heavenly inheritance. In this work the Sunday-school Union rendered valuable aid. He urged the Sunday-school teachers to continue to be "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that their labour would not be in vain in the Lord." (Cheers.)

Mr. W. GROSER read an abstract of the annual report. The committee referred with satisfaction to the operations upon the continent, which they now regard among the permanent and not least interesting agencies for promoting the establishment of Sunday-schools. The Union would be represented at the General Conference to be held in New York next September by Mr. C. Reed, M.P., and Mr. Daniel Pratt. The bill to exempt Sunday and ragged schools from parochial rating had received the Royal assent. The library has 1,308 enrolled members, many of whom are senior scholars. The number of volumes issued from the circulation library in 1869 was 17,786. Forty-five new photographs illustrating the results of the further labours of the Palestine Exploration Fund have been purchased. The Tonic Sol-fa singing classes and senior scholars' meetings had been continued. A series of teachers' reunions to bring together the teachers of the schools in the metropolitan auxiliaries had been successfully initiated. The attendance at the training class average 100 persons each week. The total number of lectures delivered with the panoramas during the year was 268. The grants for scholars' libraries had been 435, and for teachers' own libraries, 35. A new auxiliary has been formed, entitled the North-West, and consisting mostly of schools formerly in union with the West London Auxiliary. It is composed of forty-five schools, 1,020 teachers, and 12,072 scholars. The twelve metropolitan auxiliaries this year return 766 schools, 16,814 teachers, and 191,495 scholars, and the 165 country unions return 2,910 schools, 71,715 teachers, and 549,303 scholars, the totals showing an increase on last year, of 151 schools, 1,860 teachers, and 31,790 scholars. The increase in London amounts to 49 schools, 740 teachers, and 10,280 scholars, and in the country to 4 unions, 102 schools, 1,120 teachers, and 21,510 scholars. Of the teachers connected with the London auxiliaries, 84 per cent., and of those belonging to the country unions 72 per cent. are members of Christian churches, while 76 per cent. of the metropolitan teachers, and 84 per cent. of the country teachers were formerly London scholars. The efforts made by Her Majesty's Government to provide a scheme of national education, whether entirely successful or not, cannot alter, though it may intensify, the duties and responsibilities of Sunday-school teachers. The committee, with a view to promote increased intelligence and efficiency, had determined to institute a series of competitive examinations for Sunday-school teachers in Scripture history, geography, and antiquities, the various departments of Biblical literature, the principles and art of teaching, and other subjects connected with the teacher's preparation and work. The examinations would be open to teachers of connected schools in and around the metropolis, irrespective of attendance on any classes or lectures. The first examination will be held at 56, Old Bailey, on Tuesday evening, June 28th, and will be conducted by means of printed papers. The subject selected is "The Life of Abraham," in its historical, national, and geographical aspects, and its moral and spiritual teachings. Sixty-one candidates were already enrolled. The income of the benevolent fund had been 2,046*l.* 11*s.* 9*d.*, and the expenditure

1,918*l.* 2*s.* 11*d.* The subscriptions for the continental fund, including a balance of 320*l.* 0*s.* 2*d.*, had amounted to 901*l.* 8*s.* 9*d.*, and the sum in hand on account of the extension fund was 125*l.* 10*s.* One legacy of 50*l.*, less duty, was received during the year.

The Rev. ROBERT BERRY moved, and the Rev. FRANCIS TUCKER seconded, the first resolution, which was as follows:—

That this meeting, impressed with the great advantages, national, social, and religious, which have resulted from Sunday-school organisation in England and America, rejoices at the steady though gradual extension of similar institutions on the Continent of Europe, and warmly commends to the sympathies of all Christians the efforts being made by the Sunday-school Union for the prosecution of this enterprise.

W. H. STEPHENSON, Esq., in supporting the resolution, appealed to the publications of the Sunday-school Union as a proof that Biblical instruction might be given which was not open to the objection of being either sectarian or proselytising. This question was an ecclesiastical rather than a "religious" difficulty. He urged upon the attention of teachers the desirability of establishing separate religious services for children.

The Rev. C. VINCE, of Birmingham, moved the next resolution:—

That this meeting, convinced that knowledge rightly directed is the handmaid of piety, rejoices in the efforts now being made to provide a comprehensive system of national elementary education. At the same time this meeting recognises the paramount importance of moral and religious instruction and training, and calls upon all Sunday-school teachers to seek by every means in their power to prepare themselves for augmented duties and responsibilities, so that the anticipated advance of national intelligence may be attended by corresponding progress in morality and religion.

He heartily sympathised in this resolution, for it disclaimed all hostility to and all hatred of secular knowledge; more than that, it expressed the conviction that secular knowledge was not naturally and necessarily hurtful to religion, but may be made and ought to be made the handmaid of piety. As a company of Christian labourers they were, therefore, only consistent with themselves when they rejoiced in the effort made to increase the elementary education of the English people. The resolution did not discuss the merits of the different schemes of education, but they recognised that beneath the surface diversity of scheme and counter-scheme there was a great amount of unity in the determination that the children of this generation and the children of coming generations shall be educated more universally and efficiently than the children of England have ever been educated before. There must be education for every child in the land. If the parsimony of the illiberal prosperous stand in the way they must have compulsory rates; if sectarian prejudice, denominational rivalry, theological preferences, or ecclesiastical domination were the obstacles, these must give place; if guilty carelessness or the guiltier selfishness of dissolute or drunken parents are the barrier, then those parents must be compelled to do their duty to their children; and for himself he should have no squeamishness in enforcing such compulsion, comforting himself with the remembrance that the "law is not made for the righteous man, but for the wilful and disobedient." (Applause.) The resolution took no notice of the diversities; but he would refer to them because others had referred to them. There are some who think that in the daily schools there should be a very large mingling of secular and religious and theological instruction. There are others who think that there should be a very small amount of religious instruction with secular instruction; and there are others who think that the ultimate settlement of the question is in the separation of the secular from the spiritual. He was not there to advocate either of those three views, but in justice to those absent he was bound to say that there were many who advocate the separation of the secular from the spiritual who were as fully entitled to be recognised as Christian teachers as were those Roman Catholics of whom they had heard to-night, who were willing to retain the Bible, and he had no doubt were willing to retain a great deal more than the Bible. (Cheers.) If they wanted to increase and maintain the spiritual culture of the nation, they must look to the Sunday-school teachers, who, he believed, were prepared to do their work better in the future than ever they had done it in the past. There were differences of opinion about the separation of the spiritual from the secular, but if the State should at any time say, "We will see to the secular and the churches must see to the spiritual," he believed that the churches would be prepared to take the additional work, and would think of the old times when the Church had to do all the spiritual work done in the world, and when the magnitude of her toil and destitution of all earthly sources made her cleave to her Lord more fully, and realise His precious promises more completely. Of one thing they might be assured, that there would not be in any State system more of religious education than in the past; there might be less, so that, however the question was settled, Sunday-school teachers must gird up their loins for increased effort. (Applause.)

The Rev. W. O. SIMPSON, missionary from India, seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

On the motion of Mr. C. REED, M.P., seconded by Mr. GROSER, a cordial vote of thanks was presented to the Chairman.